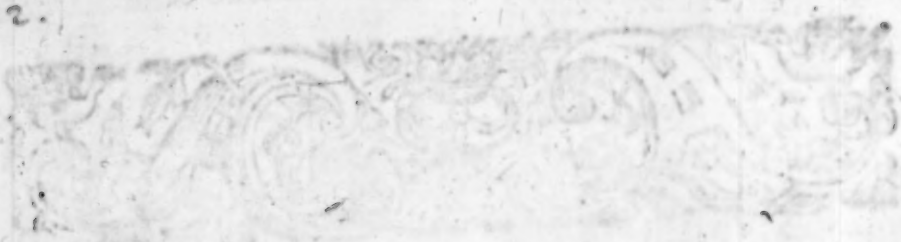
EPICEDIVM,

A Funerall Song, vpon

the vertuous life, and godly death, of the right vvorshipfull the Lady *Helen Branch.*

Virtus sola manet, cætera cuncta ruunt.

LONDON
Printed by Thomas Creede.
1594.



EPICEDIVM,

In obitum illustrissimæ mulieris dominæ Helenæ Branch, vxoris multum venerandi equitis Iohannis Branch, quondam pernobilis ciuitatis Londini Maioris perquam honorabilis.

YOu that to shew your wits haue taken toyle,
In registring the deeds of noble men:
And sought for matter in a forraine soyle,
(As worthie subiects of your siluer pen)
Whom you haue rais'd from darke obliuions den.
You that haue writ of chaste *Lucretia*,
Whose death was witnesse of her spotlesse life:
Or pend the praise of sad *Cornelia*,
Whose blameless name hath made her fame so rife:
As noble *Pompeys* most renoumed wife.
Hither vnto your home direct your eies:
Whereas vnthought on, much more matter lies.

An inuocation or instigation of greater Poëtes.

Matter that well deserues your golden stile,
And substance that will fit your shadowes right,
Whereon his wits a Scholler well may file:
Whereof a Poet needs not blush to write,
When strangers cantes should be banisht quite.
And this bright Comet, of whose splendant raies,
My too-vnworthie pen shall giue a sight,
A Ladie was, of whose deserued praise
A farre more learned Artist ought to write:
Lesse wits should speake of starres of lesser light.
Yet since their waies, by her light many finde,
I (mongst the rest) may shew my thankfull minde.

When first her life gaue essence to her light,
daughter of mr William Nicolson
She was the daughter of a worthie sire,
And *William Nicolson* his name it hight:
To whom dame *Fortune* gaue his hearts desire,
Rich, and yet free from haut ambitions fire:
Yea double rich by such an offpring faire,
Who from her cradle, and yoong infancie
Gaue certaine augures of her vertues rare,
And what a matron she in time would be:
Her seemely graces wrought her fathers glee.
And for her beautie, he gaue her the name
Of her, whom *Troy* did make so much of fame.

Only her face vnto her name was like,
Her vertues rather shone like *Phœbes* pride,
Diana
Or her whose shaft did rash *Acteon* strike,
When from his light her selfe she sought to hide.
Well might she vaunt of *Iudiths* wit beside,
Nor was *Polixena* so much admir'de
For maydens blush, and seemely modestie:
Nor faire *Virginia* halfe so much desir'de
For comely grace, and ciuill curtesie:
As she was praisde of high and low degree.
As hard it was her constancy to moue,
As *Cleopatra* from *Anthonius* loue.

And thus she liu'd (whiles she a mayd did liue)
Till fathers care, and maydens ripened yeares,
Did to a worthie man as wife her giue:
Like taketh like, all ages choose their peeres,
And now do end her parents cares, and feares:
For as her life did make them happie deem'd,
And as her blisse did make to thriue their ioyes,
So by her losse they had vnhappie seem'd,
And her mishaps had fram'd their dyre annoyes:
The husbandman his fields for corne imployes.
And happie he, who from his happie seed,
Doth reape a great grandfathers name, for meed.

Iohn

Iohn Mynors was her louing husband cald,
Who blest her aged parents by his sonne:
And with three daughters more their ioyes enstald:
(But foule oft falles, vvhen faire is vvell begun)
For long these liu'd not but their glasse vvas run.
We daily see vvhen *Phœbus* in the skie
Is highest mounted, straight he gins descend:
And vvhen good-haps do sit so vvondrous high,
They must decline (although not haue an end)
For each extreame, of force must paire, or mend.
Tis better alvvaies bide calamitie,
Then once feele, ioyes and then taste miserie.

Mr. Thon Minors first husband of Helen Nicolson.

Issue 1. sonne; & 3. daughters.

They gone, vvith them vvas gone the fathers blisse,
And with his blisse, the mothers comfort goes:
And vvith her comfort vvent her husbands misse,
And by his misse, increast her treble vvoes.
On vvhat vvorlds prop, may man his trust repose?
The yoonger grasse doth vvither ere the hay,
The stronger flieth, and leaues the vveake behinde,
The childes life ere the fathers flits avvay,
The husband dies, ere vvife hath death assignde,
Daughters sonne, husband dead, she life doth finde.
Yet dide her ioyes: the mirth vvhich she could haue,
Was vvith her teares, to vvash their thirstie graue.

Novv (like to her vvho drunke her husbands dust)
She for her husband, lou'd her husbands trade,
A Chronicle of vvhich needs be they must,
VVho by that loue full vvealthy haue bene made:
The vvitnesse liues, the fame then cannot fade.
And like to them vvho do adopt successors)
She, for her children, did regard the poore,
Of vvhom there liue, that may be iust professors,
VVho oft haue bene relieued at her doore,
Nor this vvas all, for they haue had much more.
For Christ his vvill she executed faithfully,
Prison'd, sicke, naked, poore, she gaue his legacie.

Artemisia wife of Mausolus King of Caria.

And thus she liu'd (whilst widow she did liue,)
Till husbands death, and widowes dried teares
Were almost out of minde, and griefe did giue
A place vnto the course of some spent yeares.
(Vnwise whose house doth fall and no new reares,)
Then was she grafted in a worthie stemme,
And of a green-leau'd *Branch* the blossome prou'd
To him more deare, then was the richest gemme:
And so togither they both liu'd and lou'd,
And still her Orphanes care the mother mou'd.
For though nor *Branch*, nor blossome frute did beare,
Yet both in good workes alwaies fruitfull were.

In time this *Branch* so farre abroad did spread,
That ouer London it did cast his shade:
(A neast where many vertuous birds are bred)
Of whom, some on this *Branch* their neasts haue made:
Long flourish may his leaues, and neuer fade.
And though the stocke, the Branch, the blossom sweete
Wants sap, is withered, and is falne away,
Yet doth a yoong plant, spring vp at their feete,
Which shall their greene leaues vp in safetie laie,
And they vnscattered, maugre blasts shall staie.
Yea from the roote, the iuyce this plant hath gotten,
Shall make them flourish, when their roote is rotten.

The *Branch* being dead, the blossome gan to droupe,
Like to a parcht flower in the dogdayes rage:
The shepheard fled, toth' wolfe the lambs must stoupe,
Youths heate being past, there's small resist in age:
And now no comfort could her cares asswage.
Yet still in vertuous deeds she spent her daies,
Poore virgins thereof still can make report,
Those naked persons well may tell her praise,
Whom she hath cloathed in a seemely sort:
(Surely a treasure laid in a strongest fort)
But now hath death cut off her vertues prime,
In ripened haruest of her golden time.

Her

Her faithfull end, was like her godly life,
Wedn'sday the tenth of Aprill, and no more
It was, when as was seene her breaths last strife:
The yeare was fifteene hundreth, ninetie foure,
And gratefull *Abchurch* hath her bones in store.
You two strong props that vndershore the vine,
From whose ripe clusters sweetest *Nectar* flowes,
Whereof do drinke, the famous *Muses* nine,
Performe more full, what dutie doth impose,
Bring hither *Cypres* sad, see where it growes.
Embalme with *Mirrhe*, and sticke with *Rosemarie*,
Time is the onely hearbe which rests for me.

Helen Nicolson, Ladie Branch deceased the 10. Aprilis 1594

Ladie Branch buried in St Mary Abchurch London.

Instigation of Oxforde, & Cambridg.

Quæ te propellat (nimium propensa)
Cura mors? O te properans veloci
Penna quis turbet? Dare terga cogat
Quod medicamen?

Aequè tu regis deruis superbi
Regias, & sic inopum cucumas.
Cura sunt morti iuuenes senesq,
Semper eadem.

Sola post mortem, remanet in æuum
Virtus, quæ nunquam peritura probis,
Fama floreſcet, licet ipsa cumbunt
Corpora in vrnis.

FINIS. *W. Har.*

Inter honoratos dignaris habere Poetas. RL. 1594.

HELENÆ NICOLSON dominæ BRANCH
epitaphium, lapide Lydio insculptum, &
literis aureis inscriptum, in tumulum
delubro Sanctæ Mariæ Abchurche
LONDON decentissimè extructum,
Anno a partu Virginis: 1594.to

In felicem memoriam piæ pulchræ & pudicæ fœminæ
Dominæ HELENÆ BRANCH, filiæ venerabilis
GVLIELMI NICOLSON olim civis & Pannarij LONDON
quondam per quadraginta annos (& eo amplius) uxoris
viri dignissimi IOHANNIS DIINORS civis, ac etiam
Pannarij LONDON, cui peperit filium unum Rogerum,
& filias tres, Joannam, Ripman, & Margaretam,
omnes me prote defunctos. Nuper ad annum usque
vigesimum uxoris venerabilissimi viri IOHANNIS
BRANCH militis aurati quondam præclarissimæ
civitatis LONDON honoratissimi Maioris:
ROBERTVS NICOLSON generosus ex fratre nepos
virtus hæres & dictæ Dominæ solus executor, suis
sumptibus spontaneis hoc monumentum posuit.

Nuper fui vti estis:
Nunc sum vti eritis.

Quam per felicem pietas opulentia forma
Fecere in terris modo suffragante popello
Suffragante Deo fidei constantia vitæ
Æternum in cælis te nunc iubet esse beatam.

Nonagenaria obiit 10.mo Aprilis
Anno Salutis: 1594.to

Cuius honoratissimæ Dominæ exequiæ mœrentes, splendente
die lunæ 29.o Aprilis 1594.to magna comitante caterua
tam ornatissimi Domini CVTBERTI BVCKLE tunc
Dominum Generosorum, consanguineorum, affinium, proximorum
aduocatorum; perhonorificarumq; Dominarum generosarum
aliorumq; plurimorum ploratorum, amicorum, seruorum
& pauperum; honorifice celebratæ fuerunt.

Tetrastichon suprascriptum Anglicè.

Made whom Pietie Plentie Beautie rare
thrice happie made on earth by peoples voices:
By constant truely faith Heauen doth prepare
eternall bliss for thee where IOVE reioices.

Per Robin Nicolson dictæ Dominæ nepotem

Idem Anglicè.

Whom Pietie Plentie & Beawtie made
thrice happie here in Earth among the best:
Her truely vith whose trew feare heauen vade
maides nome vth God in heauen for euer blest.

Ex Abchurche 1594.